

Wing, Springfield Air National Guard from January 5, 2008 to August 21, 2011, and upon his retirement after more than 29 years of dedicated service to the United States and the United States Air Force.

Colonel Roberts received his commission in 1982 upon his graduation from the U.S. Air Force Academy. After graduation, he completed Air Force Pilot Training with an assignment to fly the A-10 Thunderbolt. Following his A-10 assignment, Colonel Roberts went on to fly the AT-38 and various models of the F-16C, while stationed in numerous locations including: New Mexico, Florida, Arizona, and Torrejon Air Base in Spain.

While assigned to Torrejon Air Base, he deployed and flew combat sorties in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Colonel Roberts was shot down over downtown Baghdad on January 19, 1991 and spent six weeks as a Prisoner of War until combat operations ceased and he was released in March of 1991.

In 1996, Colonel Roberts was assigned as the Active Duty Advisor to the 178th Fighter Wing, Springfield Air National Guard. In 2000, he resigned from active duty and was commissioned into the Ohio Air National Guard. As a member of the Ohio Air National Guard, Col. Roberts held numerous leadership positions, culminating as the Commander of the 178th Fighter Wing, Springfield Air National Guard Base.

Colonel Roberts' command of the 178th was simply outstanding, as evidenced by his winning the 2010 Ohio Adjutant General's Commander of the Year Award. He won this award for his invaluable contributions to the families of the 178th by ensuring all of their needs were met while maintaining a 100 percent deployment cycle and a changing mission set that required a complete retraining and reassignment of many of the Wing's personnel.

His "people first" style of leadership helped lead the 178th Fighter Wing through a successful transition from an F-16 Training Wing, including international students, to an Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Wing flying the MQ-1 Predator. During this

transition, the 178th completed all sortie requirements, totaling more than 5,800 flying hours with zero mishaps.

Colonel Roberts is a Command Pilot with over 5,000 flying hours, and has received numerous Department of Defense Awards, including the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, and Prisoner of War Medal.

For his tireless service and strong dedication to our Nation and the world's greatest Air Force, I join the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District in extending our congratulations for a mission well done and a huge thanks for his many years of service. We wish him and his family the very best in their future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS STATION AT CAMP ROBERTS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 26, 2011

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Satellite Communications Station at Camp Roberts, California, for fifty years of service to our nation. Nestled in the rolling rangeland of California's Central Coast, Camp Roberts has a long continuous tradition dating back to WWII of training soldiers for the active duty Army and Army National Guard. Many veterans remember Camp Roberts for its beautiful vistas and searing summer heat. But there is a lesser known side of Camp Roberts history and continuing service.

Half a century ago, at the dawn of the satellite age, defense engineers focused on Camp Roberts for its ideal location for communicating with satellites stationed over the Pacific Ocean. The Department of Defense installed a satellite communications terminal on a remote hill in the center of Camp Roberts in support of the then nascent Defense Commu-

nications Satellite Program. It was the first world-wide strategic communications station of its kind to be established. Today, the Camp Roberts Satellite Communications Station, provides highly reliable, relevant, and unique advanced communications that are crucial to the combat effectiveness of the Armed Forces of the U.S., and critical to our national security.

This station is the premier Gateway for the Department of Defense, providing joint interoperable communications capabilities and the full spectrum of communications services in direct support to the President, Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Combatant Commanders, Department of Defense components, Warfighters, and civil authorities.

Camp Roberts Satellite Communications Station is one of the oldest and most prestigious operational signal assets belonging to the U.S. Department of Defense. Since its inception a half-century ago, the Camp Roberts Satellite Communications Station has flawlessly executed critical communications support during the most pivotal times in our nation's history. The unsung heroes of the Satellite Communications Station at Camp Roberts have been vital to the success of every major conflict from the fall of Saigon to the killing of Osama bin Laden, every space shuttle launch, and every disaster relief effort since Hurricane Katrina. Every day they contribute to global stability and national security and help protect the lives of the men and women serving our nation in harm's way. Indeed this House approved last year funding for a major expansion of the station and its capacity.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House in commending the men and women who have served at the Camp Roberts Satellite Communications Station over the course of the past fifty years. Their efforts are not forgotten. And on the occasion of this anniversary, I want to particularly single out those on duty today, for their unceasing efforts are indeed the true monument to this important milestone in the history of our nation's defense.